

OH NO! HERE COMES...

THE OMEN



2024 ~~1~~ 50TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!

JACOB CHARBOT F'86

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Front Cover: Jacob Chabot, F95

Back Cover: Jacob Chabot, F95

Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in any format (no PDFs please) by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, or email. Get your submissions to omen@hampshire.edu, the Omen Office or Ida's mailbox (1240)

Policy

The Omen is a bimonthly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous. Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fan fiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry: we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it. Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited, and we can't promise any spellchecking either, so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish.

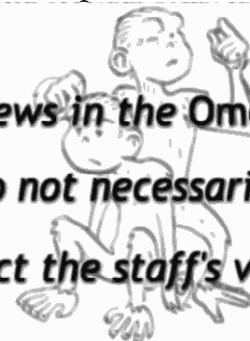
Your submission must include the name you use around campus: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views. (Note: Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.)

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which usually takes place on alternate Thursday nights in the basement of Merrill in the company of a computer with an extremely inadequate monitor. You should come. We don't bite. You can find the Omen on other Thursdays in Saga, the post office, online at <http://expelallo.men>, and just about any other place we can find to put it.

Views in the Omen (5)

Do not necessarily (7)

Reflect the staff's views (5)



EDITORIAL

STILL KICKING

by Ida Kao

This issue is all about the past, but first we need to talk about the present. And what a present we have, in the form of this incredible front and back cover by Jacob Chabot F96! There's a present just for me, too; Jay Poggi and Leo Zhang, the other two Omen signers (and our soon-to-be-co-editors), were both willing to stay up late doing the bulk of the transcribing of the past submissions that OCR couldn't decipher, and of course helping me lay it out to make it nice and neat. It made laying this issue out, dare I say it... fun? Even with all of us nitpicking at how every single column looks wrong and making miniscule adjustments until we decide it's not worth fussing with it further.

This issue, of course, is a present for you! Preserve this; it's gonna be a super valuable historical document some day, I promise. It's gonna sell for a bunch of money on eBay. Or maybe just a few dollars; either way, you'll have made a profit! I've also got a bonus present if you're reading this during the 50th Anniversary celebration. You are invited to join past and present Omenites at Merrill/Dakin Pavilion for tea on Sunday, October 17! Drop in at any time between 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

I think this event is remarkably fitting: it's mostly taking place after the 50th celebration has ended, it's not part of the official itinerary online, and not at all publicized through official channels of communication. I have no clue who's gonna show up. The Omen's also never had an event like this before; in the past someone made up a bunch of stuff on the fly and then no one ever did it again, or it became a recurring tradition we still do. This issue, the Greatest Hits, has also (to my knowledge) never been done solely with reprinted submissions nor for a Hampshire anniversary instead of an Omen-specific one. Who the hell knows whether any of this will stick. It's hard to say when The Omen has always been a scrappy underdog, and I doubt Hampshire as an institution wants to publicly acknowledge our existence in any way, regardless of how individuals within the institution feel about it. We've published everything from porn to scathing criticisms of whoever is President of the College at the time and the student government at the time to satire insulting whichever paper exists at the time. We're a reflection of Hampshire College, flaws and all, not the shining utopia all of us want it to be, and that some pretend it is.

It's nothing short of a miracle that Hampshire has kept going for 50 years, so I guess The Omen existing for... 28ish(?) years on a campus that can barely keep a proper newspaper going for much longer than it takes a typical student to graduate is a double miracle. Nonetheless, I consider The Omen and its anti-authority streak befitting for a campus like this; in fact, it might be the primary reason The Omen has managed to exist for as long as it has.

It is with the knowledge that everyone's favorite lowbrow community rag has become "the paper of record" for Hampshire College, that I write this editorial—my ego so inflated it's ready to pop like a balloon—to an issue celebrating all the flagrant shitposting, the complaints of students who have every right to be mad at the bureaucratic nonsense and the abuses of powers by administrators and fellow students alike. And last but not least, a huge thank you to the alums and current students who nominated submissions for reprinting, the signers and submitters who ensured we kept printing across the years, and the institution that inexplicably keeps giving us money to print these things. No matter where you are in the world, The Omen will always be there to hate so you don't have to.

Editorial Statement from Ye Olde Uberwench On High

Vol 1, Issue 1, January 28 1993

By Stephanie Cole, F91

First things first. Hampshire is a graveyard for music, dances, and newspapers. What we have here is a school that brings in a few bands a semester, a conglomerate of techno-pop vogue fests, and the biggest sucker trap for anyone trying to slip by with a journalism major since Clark Kent went to work for the Daily Planet. An experimental potpourri with lots of ideas and a chaos emblem for a logo. An editor who writes in fragments and tries to rally together a Y.A.H.N. (yet another Hampshire newspaper) on a piddling budget of \$250 and an attitude.

So. What's the point of pulling a thesis-99 and nailing this to the door of your mod, littering up your lounge, or violating your bathroom? Blame Pandora and the fact that I have the tiniest scintilla of hope that this might work. Yes, folks, here you have it-- in the grand tradition of Longworth, Patterson, and the like--The Making of a Newspaper.

But here. Let's begin the begin. Point-- a newspaper will never both survive and be of vital interest to the community at this college. It's no-man's land out there. Stick something in front of people's noses, and yeah, they might just read it, might cover it with grease-soaked fingers over a grinder at Saga, but does anybody really care? Counterpoint--the Omen is not a newspaper. Call us a rag, a screamsheet, a newsletter. I prefer the term "newsmagazine," slightly more professional, probably undeserved, but at least it gives us something to shoot for.

What you have here at The Omen is a bunch of malcontents sick to death of the Examiner, sick to death of whatever else might be professed in the name of news by the Administration or the like, and eager to create some interest out of the apathy and intrigue that run unchecked at the school. Believe it or not, things do go on here. Bands play to half-filled rooms of people trying to mosh in a raging torrent of ten people, scandals go house in an environment where no one really knows the real story, opinions gets

scrawled on walls and sidewalks due to the lack of a proper forum for rage and opinions. Hampshire is chock-filled with conflicts, concepts, projects, and events, all coalescing in a swirl of half-heard rumor and gossip. Twelve hundred or so students can rake up a lot of interest and activity, and maybe, just maybe, a little two-bit rag can try to get everyone at least informed about what everyone else is doing.

Why bother? Good question. Personally, well, as Citizen Kane said, "I think it might be fun to run a newspaper." But beyond that, I think there is a definite need for a stump, a soapbox, that comes out regularly and fairly frequently, to get the news out in time for it to be acted upon and reacted about. The more Hampshire students I get to know, the more I pick up on a certain sense of misplacement and alienation at this establishment. We all possess a small fragment of what this place is about, but there is no feeling of general mutuality to bring us together. Yes-- we need a football team!!!

Right.

And so, to punish all you potential jocks out there for not doing your civic duty by donning a helmet and bringing us all together in a radiating skirl of unity and spirit, I am going to force you instead to be a part of this project. If nothing else, by reading it, but hopefully, something about The Omen will catch your mind and inspire you to write about your own news, your own opinions, your own cheesy artwork and personal revelations. People at Hampshire will care if you make them.

Join the struggle. Solidarity forever.

And remember, it's either The Omen contriving to make us all a little more aware of each other, or Community Work.

Yick.

Stephanie Cole
Editor-in-chief
The Hampshire Omen
Box 324

Council Reinstates Newspaper

Volume 1, Issue 3, February 14 1993

By Colin Birch, F91

Community Council voted unanimously on February 2nd to recreate the fabled Hampshire Community Newspaper as a permanent subcommittee of Council.

The newspaper, which had once again been defunct since last semester, will now be officially published by Community Council. Randy Jones is chair of Council and co-sponsor of the motion to recreate the newspaper (along with Dean of Students Trey Williams).

"I don't want to go into the sordid details too much about why the editorial collective of the Examiner as an independent entity did not pan out, but suffice it to say that it did not pan out," said Jones.

Community Council has, in fact, always been the publisher of the newspaper by the fact that we funded the newspaper," said Jones. "What I'm seeking to do is formalize that relationship."

Under the new system, the chair of Community Council is the publisher of the newspaper. He or she responsible for convening a "Newspaper Advisory Board" made up of students, faculty and staff to evaluate the paper and suggest possible changes

and improvements.

The managing editor of the newspaper is now officially an employee of Community Council. He or she will be paid \$500.00 a semester by Council for his or her work.

Other positions remain much the same as they were in the older incarnations of the newspaper. All positions except for the managing editor are unpaid, although the business manager receives a ten percent commission on all paid ads.

This news system was devised to assure continuity within the newspaper, Jones said.

"This motion does not and will not preclude any independent effort," said Jones. "If a group of students or an individual student comes to the funding process with a proposal to do a newspaper independently, that's great."

Morgan Sommer will once again serve as the managing editor of the recreated Examiner. The news editor will be Jenni Ewing, a journalism major. Both are already members of Community Council. Michael Lesy, professor of literary journalism, has agreed to be on the Newspaper Advisory Board.

Can't We All Just Get Along?

Volume 4, Issue 8, November 11 1994

By Jennifer L. Pozner, F92

The Queer Community Alliance (QCA.) recently put up a poster on the wall across from the ride board at the post office, inviting students' questions, comments, and suggestions (regarding racial diversity within the QCA). I feel the need to publicly respond to certain comments written there, as I don't feel they can be adequately explored on a piece of oaktag. Though I will be using the word "we" in reference to the QCA, I am speaking only for myself, not as a QCA. representative.

I am aggravated and dismayed at a few of the ignorant and vindictive accusations written on the board. First of all, the QCA is not "desperate for more members," and we are not out to "convert" anyone. Queer people know first hand how impos-

sible it is to change their sexual orientation, and how dishonest it would be to try. The idea that Hampshire's QCA is comprised mainly of "college experimenters" who want to fit into this alternative campus" is ludicrous. Some people know all their lives that they are sexually "different," that they desire people of their own sex or that they love and want people regardless of gender. Others spend many years coming to that realization. Whichever the case, anyone who sleeps with, dates, or becomes romantically involved with someone of their own sex does so because they want to, not because sleazy, calculating queers teamed up to seduce him or her. Hell, even if we did roam in packs looking for straight innocents to tempt into our

“lifestyle,” seduction consummated is consensual sex — unless a person is raped, they have control over their sexual choices. Someone who has led a heterosexual life until college and then identifies as queer has not been converted, they have merely acknowledged another side of themselves.

This idea that queer folks won’t be satisfied until everyone is queer is a common myth that serves both to attack us as proselytizers and dismiss those who have just come out as merely being “P.C.” and trendy. To the person who passed judgment on QCA members’ sexual identities, I ask the following: Do you sleep with people to prove a political point or to fit in? No? Well, neither do we. (If you do, I pity your lack of self-determination and your willingness to be manipulated.)

And to the woman who wrote “Just because I’m straight doesn’t mean that I haven’t discovered my ‘true self’ or that I’m not a true woman!”, you are absolutely right. Who in the QCA has told you otherwise? Lesbians and bisexual women want the right to be as open about their sexualities as you are about yours, without stigma or threat of violence. How does this translate to “No woman is a real woman unless she’s queer?” The queer community, for the most part, doesn’t accept any one definition of femininity or masculinity as “real,” rather we question the idea that gender is that fixed. Maybe you should think about your defensiveness, and why you feel that the QCA is out to disavow “your true self.”

To the person who believes that the QCA is “just a big clique,” who are you referring to? The QCA holds events, meetings and parties in doughnut 4 and brings together many people who do not otherwise socialize with one another. Many of these events are open to the larger Hampshire community, as is the drag ball. Some events and meetings are not open to all students in order to create a small, safe space for queer people to feel comfortable, without the need to explain or justify our ideas or behaviors. In a world that constantly affirms straight life, why is it that every time queer people spend a little time focusing on ourselves, we are called separatist or cliquish? Also, remember that no one group or friends on this campus who you might see eating and laughing together in

saga represents the entire QCA. (My friends and I eat together like any family would. Many of us have been friends for years, and so we may seem like a clique, but no more so than any group of people who have weathered wonderful and horrendous times together at college. And, by the way, we are definitely not all queer.)

What surprised and angered me the most was the rant by the person who claims that the QCA are “all so fucking heterophobic” and we practice “reverse sexual discrimination.” No examples were given illustrating how the QCA has exhibited heterophobia (aside from a complain that a showing of cowgirl movies was open only to women), but the person rambled on for quite a while about the supposed bias we show towards straight people. I am appalled at this misappropriation of our own language.

There was no basis given while attacking us as heterophobic. I would like to ask a few questions of the author of those accusations: What is heterophobia, in your mind? Have any members of the Hampshire QCA ever physically or verbally assaulted you for being straight? Has anyone told you that your lifestyle was immoral? That you were a sinner? That you had no right to appear in public with your lover? That you were just confused or going through a phase? That you were disgusting and should never speak about your lifestyle in public? Have you ever been made to feel like you were unsafe because you loved people of the opposite sex? Have you ever wondered why your answers to these questions would likely be diametrically opposed to the responses of most queers?

If speaking about and combating homophobia makes us heterophobic, then every African American who fights for racial equality is automatically prejudice against White people. The QCA has always welcomed the friendship, support and input of straight allies, and will continue to do so. I invite those people who wrote the comments to which I am responding, as well as the larger Hampshire community, to call me or write to me via e-mail to discuss what I’ve said or your take on these issues.

Jennifer L. Pozner
x. 4987/ box 1640
e-mail: jpozner

You Gotta Fight for Your Right...

Volume 4, Issue 9, November 18 1994

By Lauren Ryder, F93

Unlike most of the silliness that people argue about at this college, the eminent unionization of the Physical Plant workers is an issue that merits student action. The blue-collar workers employed by our expensive, yet financially screwed up school have found that over the past few years their working environment has become so intolerable that they have to take matters into their overworked hands.

The school has shown resistance to their actions from the beginning, and has made it clear that they will drag this thing out as long as they can in order to discourage their efforts. They have refused to recognize the secret ballot election held on Tuesday November 8th, that showed 22 for the union and 0 against out of the 27 workers.

One result of this recent conflict was the replacement of Physical Plant Director Sheila Moos, with Marriott's Larry Archey. Although his placement as Director is temporary, Archey is a candidate for the permanent position. Opinions on the temporary placement differ among the workers. One expressed that Archey is more of a "people person" than Moos and thinks that he will be more likely to accept input from workers. Another worries that tenancy, and will be working along with the same people in the office, the inefficiency that plagues the department will continue.

Although the replacement of Moos may at first seem to be a step in the right direction, Hampshire is following one of the most classic examples of anti-union action. According to David Cohen, representative of the United Electrical Workers, it is customary for a company to lay blame for all the problems on one boss and fire them. This restores morale and gives the workers hope that conditions will improve. Unfortunately, since the power structure remains the same, it leaves room for the same abuses to reemerge.

If the school does not succeed in discour-

aging Physical Plant from unionizing, they will have to go before the National Labor board in Boston. David Cohen will represent Physical Plant while Hampshire's case will be presented by Ralph Abbot, a well known union breaking attorney.

Administration sends out "sympathetic" letters from their office, hires a high-priced lawyer and hopes the whole thing blows over (Remember, we're paying for all this). While our Phys. Plant guys. ing meetings and compiling a list of reasons why their job was made more difficult and frustrating.

The major complaints by Physical Plant are listed below, none of which are unreasonable demands. The fact that a couple of the demands are things that the college should be following just to be in accordance with the state and federal laws give a hint of the disregard the school has for its employees.

There are a lot of stories that demonstrate what has been going on here, many of which can not be printed in order to protect the sources. But don't let that stop you from finding out what is going on around here. Talk to your Phys. Plant guy, you be surprised, and probably a bit repulsed at what you hear.

Hampshire College Physical Plant Employee Concerns

We, the employees of the Hampshire College Physical Plant, demand recognition of our union. The union will enable us to formulate a contract, defining those issues we feel to be most important to our work. This is not a drastic action, rather it is action taken in the best interests of the college as it will unify the Physical Plant and allow the employees to provide quality services. The following is a list of the issues that we believe need immediate attention in order to ensure the smooth operation of the Physical Plant and to protect the health, safety

...to Unionize! (At Hampshire, Anyway)

and welfare of its workers:

1. We demand the creation of a more receptive environment where suggestions for improvements in the overall maintenance of the college will be respectfully considered by management. Management need not feel threatened by new ideas, on the contrary, it should fully utilize the combined talents of its work force.

2. We demand equitable wages for all areas of Physical Plant because unfair and/or arbitrary differences in wages create divisions among workers which affect morale and work production. Inequalities now exist not only among the various departments of the Physical Plant, but also within each department.

3. We demand a thorough review of job descriptions so workers will clearly know the boundaries of their duties. Workloads have increased dramatically without a corresponding increase in compensation; this has contributed to the decline in morale at the Physical Plant.

4. We demand that the college discontinue the policy of hiring temporary workers at the Physical Plant.

5. We demand the creation of a grievance procedure that conforms to the principles of due process.

6. We demand the elimination of "volunteer" work projects that occur during the working day and where only the Physical Plant employees are asked to "volunteer." Campus wide volunteer efforts such as Spring Clean-up, are important examples of community involvement. However, the "volunteer" projects assigned to Physical Plant alone are little more than loyalty checks and a misuse of the work force.

7. We demand relief from the frustration we now encounter in obtaining the supplies we need to deliver out services to the college.

8. We demand the right to refuse to be a party to the violation of state and federal regu-

lations, as well as the right to report violations to management without fear of reprisal or re-crimination.

9. We demand that any overtime or special work projects be offered first to Physical Plant employees prior to being offered to subcontractors, Physical Plant employees should not be used to complete the project left unfinished by those subcontractors, as has been the practice.

10. We demand that the college comply with federal law with respect to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

11. We demand that the pace of the work be a reasonable one and that the workers not be forced into "rush" jobs due to poor planning by management. The likelihood of injury increases and the quality of work necessarily decreases where the workers are directed to do a project at the last minute and without proper preparation. While we recognize that emergencies will occur at times, requiring a more rapid pace of work, we also recognize that some "emergencies" are created to get more production out of the work force.

12. We demand that a reasonable policy for time off be developed with worker input. The decision to grant time off should be based not only on the needs of the college but also on the needs of the workers.

13. We demand that right to be active participants in the formation and implementation of policies that affect our work environment and job performance.

October, 1994

There is currently a petition circulating that will go to the administration showing student support for our Physical Plant workers. If you want to tell administration that they should not and can not continue to treat people this way, sign it.

-Lauren Ryder

It's Us Or Your Mother

Volume 10, Issue 6, December 12 1997

By Jordan Strauss, F96

Let me start off by extending a deep and heartfelt apology to Richard Wright. Somehow or another, we severely botched the printing of his article. The article, as it was originally intended to appear, is on page 20.

Also, I'd like to apologize to The Forward. They receive a disproportionate amount of bashing this issue. Being submission-based, there's no way to truly control our content, still though, you have to give respect where respect is due.

On the topic of The Forward, The Omen would like to congratulate Gabe Ruegg and Amy Ennis on a successful year of publication. The Forward is now languishing in a severe state of disrepair. The cause of this disrepair is none other than the general apathy of the Hampshire student body. The Forward is competent from the top-down, with Gillian Andrews coming on as managing editor. But it takes more than one remarkably driven person to make a successful newspaper. I believe, and I could be mistaken, that there are currently three editor positions open. Three. Unbelievable. Think about a campus without a newspaper. Worse, think of a campus with The Omen "and Gus is going to kill me for using this phrase) as the paper of record. Think of students 10 years from now, going through the archives. "Feminism makes it hard to... what?!" Dear lord. Nay, sweet bother of Mary. The Forward is an excellent--or, at the very least, mediocre--newspaper, and we cannot let it die. I've always contested that a newspaper will never survive on this campus because no one wants to write about things that they don't care about, have it edited to a ridiculous degree, only to have no one read it. This may or may not be true, but I find it disturbing that not that many students seem to be moved enough by the possible death of a fantastic (save that damn Mumford strip) newspaper. Hampshire students need to wake up; everyone here needs to do our part to enrich the community, otherwise this school will fail. Imagine if Community Council, Judicial Council,

ficom (ring any bells?), the National Yiddish Book Center, the Dean of Students office (well... maybe apathy isn't all that bad), etc. all just gave up and let themselves fade away.

This campus has had a newspaper turn around rate of roughly one every two years (this is The Omen's sixth, thank you very much). Think about what that says about a campus. I guess that's more an indicator of problems (some would argue that they're benefits) inherent to a system such as Hampshire. Hampshire's divisional system forces students to do independent work. As one advances up the divisional ladder, their work becomes more and more specialized. That's where the importance of community publications comes into play. A school newspaper, and magazines like The Omen, unite our otherwise *extremely* diversified campus. If we let this paper die, we have to reinvent the wheel in a year. Let's keep a good thing going for once. If you want to write for The Forward, contact Gillian Andrews or Gabe Ruegg.

Last paragraph. The Omen has had its most propose year in a long damn time. Almost all of the reason for that falls squarely on the shoulders of unbelievable driven individuals such as Jen Howk, Michele Beach, and Jacob Chabot. If you see any of these individuals, tell them they're doing a good job. People like that on a campus like this are few and far between.

As a final note, The Forward was slated to have an ad in this issue, but pulled out at the last minute. The very last minute. The very, very last minute. Unfortunately, when this sort of thing happens, drastic measure become necessary (space-fillers). So I'd like this time to apologize to Gillian Andrews, and all the other members of The Forward. The space-filler on page 16 is not meant to polarize this campus in any way. Hopefully, by this point, you, the reader, have realized that The Omen bears no ill will against The Forward. All of us want to see them survive. Don't fuck with The Omen. It's us or your mother.

Mark "Who's Your Daddy" Hugo's Top Nine New Year's Predictions for 1999

Volume 12, Issue 1, January 29 1999

By Mark Hugo, S97

- 9) The world will end on June 6, 1999. Don't worry, it will open for business after a quick coffee break and maybe a cruller.
- 8) Everyone will be full of beans this year, especially me.
- 7) On February 9th, the worlds' bank system will suffer a blow to their collective groin. Money will be worthless and all will barter with Twinkees.
- 6) On March 21, there will be an accident at a nuclear power plant located next to Billy Jo's Sea Horse World. **The sea horses will mutate into super-beings and take over the world beginning The Age of the Great Horsey.**
- 5) Bill Clinton will be impeached. Unfortunately, Al Gore will become president. His inauguration speech will be watched by record numbers of viewers who will subsequently enter comas of boredom.
- 4) MeatLoaf will be honored for the creative genius that he is. The national anthem will be replaced by Paradise by the Dashboard Light. It's not just for proms anymore!
- 3) Red Foxx will be raised from the dead paving the way for a Sanford and Son movie.
- 2) "Weird Al" Yankovic and Wanna White will go public with their long time love affair admitting that it had its humble beginnings when they co-starred in Naked Lunch 33 1/3.
- 1) Richard Nixon will come back to haunt us all. NIXON'S THE ONE! NIXON'S THE ONE! Man I feel funky today.

Alumns Got Mad Phat Hate

Volume 13, Issue 1, September 17 1999

By Gus Andrews, F95

Hi there. I'm Gus, and I don't go here any more. You must be a first year. Anyone older has read the Omen once or twice before, and decided that knitting hemp sweaters for the Hampshire sheep would be a better use of their time.

Seeing as I've graduated and have nothing better to do than stay involved with Hampshire, I thought I'd try to pass on some helpful words. This is in spite of the advice of a former buddy of mine, who insists, in true Hampshire style, that "it's hard to learn from other peoples' mistakes."

If you agree with him, there are plenty of places to start making your own mistakes at

Hampshire. You could, for instance, release the dogs in the farm kennels to do a study of their behavior in the wild. I bet Ray Coppinger will be more than happy to help you with that. Or, you could try to get into a class with Michael Lesy next semester, using an obviously fictional audition essay.

If you'd rather pick up a hint or two from someone else's mistakes and save yourself a few semesters of tuition, come sit by me a while.

First lemme give you an introduction to this paper you hold in your hands:

This is the Omen. Its motto is

"We Hate So You Don't Have To." The Omen was not put upon this earth to bring you the news, or even useful information.

No, friends, G-d moves in mysterious ways, and in addition to blessing Oral Roberts University with a lovely sacred flame over which one can roast marshmallows, He hath made Hampshire a designated outlet in which Hampshire students (and people who forget that they're not Hampshire students, like me) get to say whatever they fucking well please and get it printed, no matter how much of a waste of space it is. Not like there aren't enough places for that to happen already. **It's not like we have Jiang Zhemin and co. driving tanks over us for asserting our bisexuality and love of Gaia.**

So the Omen ends up being whatever the contributors and staff make it. If only Libertarian NAMBLA members write for the Omen, then the Omen is their soapbox. If only lesbian labor activists write (which hasn't happened, because they're a majority here and the Omen has traditionally been a mouthpiece for "unpopular opinions," which used to mean Jon Land's reviews of beef jerky and explicit stick figures), then it's their podium to bag. You've been duly forewarned. The first to the Omen wins their own P.A. system, and everyone else has to deal or have nothing to read in Saga.

If the Omen had a sensible, fair, active editorial board, and did away with the rule about printing everything, it might be less of a waste of paper. As it is, though, it's kind of an ugly, scrappy underdog, which has its own appeal.

Here's my basic primer on Hampshire: The one thing you need to know is that you have to be your own advocate. Simple as that. My first year I thought I had mastered Hampshire simply because I had memorized all the Div requirements. Boy was I ever wrong. Hampshire took me through the wringer for presuming that. Your success here will hinge on your willingness to get friendly with teachers, check up on your own paperwork, and make a coherent case for what you want to do, not on how well you understand the Div system.

Contrary to popular belief, Hampshire does have rules. Well, Hampshire does have rules and it does not have rules. What I mean is that its rules are spottily enforced, not written down, sometimes unspoken, subject to personal negotiation, and will probably be different by the time you graduate. They will come bite you on the butt whenever it's least convenient for you.

I don't just mean academic requirements. The rules around here get even hazier when you are turning in paperwork to Central Records or straightening out your award with Financial Aid.

I have one suggestion which applies both to academics and red tape: Don't presume you know what's going on until you've heard the same story from a number of sources.

Take with a grain of salt anything that students, even Div III students, tell you you can do. Because the rules are uneven, the rules which apply to them are not the same as the rules which apply to you.

If a student tells you you can turn in a paper a month late without a problem, don't listen. Ask the professor who wants the paper first. Don'tt even trust the professor when she tells you the first time that a late paper will be fine. Ask her again, and if her answers disagree, ask her a third time. I don't know how many times I finished up a big important meeting — say, my final Div II or III meeting — and was told by professors that I was all set, only to get a call from someone in Central Records a week later asking why I still hadn't passed that Div. That's the best rule of thumb I can pass along: **ASK THREE TIMES.**

The first thing you'll want to get cracking on is Div Is. They are absolutely, positively not something to worry about, at all. Don't put them off until forever, like all of my friends who "went on leave" and are afraid to come back because they haven't done any.

A Div I is roughly a 20 page paper, or equivalent. Do not bother making it longer than that. My SS Div I was 60 pages, and that was unfinished. If you want to see Will Ryan laugh, ask him about my SS Div I sometime. Leave the lengthy papers and earth-shattering revelations

for Div III.

Anyway. I said don't listen to other students about rules. It's a good idea to get other information from them, though — qualitative rather than quantitative info. For instance, here's my list of my favorite off-campus faculty:

- Agha Shahid Ali — poetry, UMass (may not teach undergrads, but if he's giving a reading you should go)

- Martin Espada — Latino poetry and smoldering rage, UMass

- Rick Fantasia — sociology, Smith (that isn't pronounced like the Disney movie, by the way)

- Sut Jhally — media studies, UMass (also may not teach undergraduates, but if he's ever lecturing it's worth listening to)

- Richard Todd — nonfiction, Smith and occasionally UMass

Sorry that's not more broad, but hey, we all have to keep our Div IIs down to a dull roar. I won't mention my favorite or least-favorite Hampshire faculty, because some of them actually read the Omen sometimes, and I wouldn't want to leave anyone out, or enrage professors who are already in tenuous states of mental health.

Here's some helpful vocabulary for you, in Hampsher alfabeticle ordur:

- Mumia. **When people say "Free Mumia," the appropriate response is something like "Pa'lante la resistencia!," not "Where can I get some?"** Mumia Abu-Jamal is a journalist who is on death row in Philly because he is suspected of murder.

The case against him is about as creaky as an Enfield staircase, however, and many people are calling him the first political prisoner in the US to face execution since the Rosenbergs. (You haven't heard about this, have you? Well, neither had I, don't feel dumb. The media have all but buried the story.) If you'd like to learn more and maybe go to a protest or two, contact Hampshire's human rights group.

- Eqbal. (We call everyone by their first name here, including the head of the U.N., who

is Kofi. Are you taking notes? Stop that.) Eqbal Ahmad was a former Hampshire professor of international politics who passed away earlier this year. He spent his life working on vital causes like the Middle East peace process, the civil rights movement in the US, and an end to strife between India and Pakistan. He was once jailed for suspicion that he was plotting to kidnap Henry Kissinger. (I wish that had worked.)

Eqbal was an amazing teacher and speaker. When he retired, Hampshire threw a bash that lasted for days and attracted Noam Chomsky and other important thinkers of the Left. They're basically repeating it this year.

If you were planning to miss the lecture by Edward Said and the rest of this weekend's events, change your plans, you ninny. You'll learn more listening to these people than in most Hampshire classes.

- Hegemony: a preponderance of power or influence over others.

- Patriarchy: rule by fathers, literally; used as "ruled by men" around here.

- Paradigm: duhhh, I forget the literal definition... it's like a rubric for understanding things, the rules of the game, like that. These three words are more used than soap on this campus, and to less effect, believe it or not.

- CSA: CSA is the reason you shouldn't go picking vegetables from the fields at the Farm Center. (If you get lost in the woods and end up in a field, you're either at the Farm Center or one of the neighboring farms. Don't pick there either. It will never heal.)

Community Supported Agriculture is the way Hampshire's Farm Center tries its damndest to be financially sustainable without the college pouring money into it. The way they do that is by selling shares in the crop to members of the community and people in the mods. Being a member of CSA is a great idea; skeezing corn and tomatoes is not.

- Dog Dog: Ask someone from my orientation group last year to tell you the story of The Fall of Dog Dog.

- John Dwork: He's the guy who majored

in frisbee, in case anybody asks. He did go on to a successful career at Wham-O.

- **Freduation:** Freduation, no longer exists, and that sucks balls. Freduation was a graduation ceremony in which Merrill resident Div IIIs passed under an arch of crossed plastic flamingoes and received a bottle of champagne from David Kerr. Then they talked to other Merrill residents about their Div IIIs. I thought it was sweet, but that last Dean of Students destroyed most of Hampshire native traditions and that was one of the ones which went.

- **Hippie Christmas:** This is the time at the end of the year when everyone at all Five Colleges is leaving the dorms. **Five College students leave more stuff than you would believe possible**, both in bins in their halls and laundry rooms and in the dorms. A good time to get new clothes and furniture.

The tables in the laundry room at Hampshire are where people leave things they want to get rid of year-round. The pickings can be really great — try Enfield if you like fancy hippie clothes. Don't leave your laundry on the tables. If there aren't any dryers free and you need to unload one which has stopped, don't leave other people's stuff on the tables either.

- **Vegan:** By most definitions, a vegetarian who does not eat eggs or dairy products. Some even avoid refined sugar and other products made with unseen animal costs. (I've been told that refined sugar is made with charcoal from animal bones.) Don't try to pressure your vegetarian and vegan friends to eat meat, please. They've already considered eating meat and made the choice to stop, which is more than most of you ramen-swilling mooks can say for yourselves.

- **Yurt.** What is the Yurt? A symbol of everything Hampshire: an unfinished Div III; a portable, felt dwelling from a third world country which Hampshire students decided could be improved with electric heaters, plexiglass windows and an Internet hookup; quirky, funky, and a very nice space to hold meetings. The Yurt has a schedule, someplace. Sign up if you want to use it to avoid confusion.

The Yurt is not your personal art gallery.

Some asshole decided it was last year and put in this huge art installation which kept those of us who meet regularly there out, and that sucked. Not only that, but he had goldfish in his exhibit which died off slowly and painfully.

Which brings me to my next point: Don't kill animals or ruin natural areas for art. I thought this was common sense, but it happens here pretty regularly with the apparent approval of the art faculty. If you find the art professors who sign off on these projects, report them to PETA. They'll get what they deserve.

Also, if you live in the dorms, do not try to keep a cat or dog. Please. **It's bad enough having a roommate, worse having one which doesn't understand human conventions, like "puke goes in the toilet, not in my Div III."** I tried it. The cat and I are filing for divorce.

Remember, I graduated, so some of this stuff may have changed since I rang the bell. And don't listen to me anyway, because I was only ever a student, and you're reading this in the Omen.

Finally:

Sting's son is going to be attending Hampshire next year. Welcome him in, and try not to make as much of a fuss about him as everyone's making over Natalie Portman.

Hall booty is Bad booty. Mod booty is worse. Theater booty is inevitable, or so I'm told.

Live in Dakin, but not so long that it makes you hard. Live in Enfield, but not so long that it makes you soft.

If you're stranded off campus after the busses stop, you might try ordering yourself back to campus with a pizza. It worked for a friend of mine.

My dad said to me something recently about being good to people even if they are very new friends who may not seem that important in your life yet. I think that's good advice, too.

Keep da fait': hopefully this will be the year of Hampshire's Rapture, when all students will be above average and palatable vegan cookies will fall like manna from heaven.

Where Are My Space Monkeys?

Volume 19, Issue 4, November 1 2002

By Michael Zole, F99

I wish I could run the Omen like Fight Club. At a school like this, with so much emphasis on feelings and safe spaces, even a non-confrontational fellow like myself is going to want to kick some ass in a semi-controlled setting. If I had Tyler Durden's charisma, I'd totally go for it. "If someone goes limp, taps out, the article is over. If this is your first time reading the Omen, you have to write." I think it's pretty obvious why I don't do that.

It's frustrating, trying to get people enthusiastic about the Omen. Everyone seems to think of this as a publication that other people write for. When I first encountered it my first year, I figured I'd write for every issue as long as I was at Hampshire (why not?). This is Zole Logic, and I don't expect everyone to make long-term decisions on a whim, but I think rational-minded people have plenty of reasons to write at least occasionally. And if your writing is at all good, people will read it, and you'll garner a bit of local fame. If your writing sucks, nobody will remember you wrote it. It's win-win.

Do you have something to write about? Hells yeah! I actually require multiple hells to express how much you have something to write about! In my last editorial I alluded to the somewhat disconnected nature of the various interests at Hampshire. So why not write about what you study? If somebody who does a lot of work at Lemelson wants to write about her experiences there, I'd be curious enough read it. If a theater major wanted to explain why theater booty is inevitable, or why they always spell it "theatre", I'm all ears. If someone wants to write about the various drugs they did at Hampshire Halloween... well, that sounds more like something the Forward would publish. For everything else, the open-

submission nature of the Omen makes it the perfect venue for sharing stuff with your peers.

I'd also be interested to see more regular content in the Omen. This takes a little more effort, since it means you actually have to do something every other week. It's worth it, though, for the consistency you lend the publication. By its nature the Omen walks the line between a true free-for-all (like the Daily Jolt forum) and a "normal" publication that has the ability to, say, refuse submissions, so anything people can expect when they pick up the Omen would be very cool I bet people who do themed columns for the Omen get all the ladies and/or men. I'd find out for myself, but I already do my part, I think.

There's one last point I'd like to make about submissions. Articles for the Omen do not have to be funny. I've heard of people who wanted to submit something but were afraid it wouldn't be funny enough, and this breaks my heart. While we do have our share of humorous and lighthearted articles (we can't control our content, because of that whole open-submission thing), if you actually sit down and read any issue of the Omen you'll find that they almost never dominate the issue. I, for example, am never funny. But more importantly, a serious article is both harder to screw up and more respectable if you pull it off.

This isn't my first wandering, nonsensical article about the Omen, but I often find myself compelled to make explicit the nature of this crazy, misunderstood magazine. I suggest you send me an article pronto or I'll keep writing these even after I graduate. And that would be breaking the first two rules of the Omen.

Predictions Cause I'm Scared

Volume 20, Issue 3, March 14 2003

By Justin Philpot, F97

As I'm sure has been the case with many students at Hampshire recently, talking about possible war with Iraq has practically become habit. There is no way to avoid it. If you're a conscious human being, or even just a passive receiver, you know what's going on. For myself, everyday and every new conversation gives me one more reason to move to a nice cabin somewhere in Australia and begin a long and mutually destructive relationship with small batch bourbon.

Its the 9th as I write this. The first 100 issues of this will come out on Friday, March 14th. The rest of the run will be distributed on the Monday after Spring Break, the 24th. I expect that by then the United States will be actively engaging in some serious military action against Iraq. I hope I'm wrong. I'm putting my money on 12:01am, March 18th as zero hour. Any decision to attack will be made then. It could happen that as the Irish and Irish-lovers celebrate, some poor janitor in an Iraqi government building will have his job terminated by a 2000lb warhead attached to a multi-million dollar cruise missile.

A comprehensive air campaign will be the backbone of any US invasion. This is because Iraq has a technologically sophisticated air defense system, and in modern warfare complete control of the airspace above the field of battle is integral to a successful campaign. Currently, the US Air Force and the US Navy rely on "stand off" weapons such as cruise missiles to effectively neutralize air defense systems without putting pilots at risk, although stealth aircraft will be a part of the initial attack as well.

Infrastructure and command and control will be priority targets in the first few days. Power plants, bridges, dual use facilities and government buildings will be

priority targets, as well as air control centers and airports. Troop assembly points, bases, and relay stations will most likely be hit by aircraft, as the conditions on target are subject to change. Targets of opportunity are left to pilot discretion, should he have adequate fuel and ammunition.

Special operations helicopters will insert commandos in any number of strategic locations, to monitor roadways, mobile missile launchers and waterways to provide up to the minute eyes-on intelligence. As was the case with the first Gulf War, special operations forces will be responsible for deception operations as well, drawing Iraqi forces away from the critical points for the impending ground attack.

As strong as the US Air Force is, there is no substitute for the soldier on the ground. You cannot hold a city with an A-10, you need an 18 year-old with a machine gun to stand on a street corner. You need to assert your power physically, but presenting a constant image of authority in a context that is undeniably in control.

The problem with that is the fact that there is no way any citizen of any country in the Middle East would look upon a member of the US military as anything other than invader. That soldier on the corner represents the beginning of a long, bloody occupation of a sovereign nation by teenagers. People who cannot legally buy beer in this country will be charged with keeping Iraqi doctors to curfew, ushering Iraqi teachers to school, and closing Iraqi streets to pedestrian traffic. The young will guard and command the battered and bruised for something they may or may not understand. Somebody from whom I wouldn't purchase a stereo is the extension of US Imperialism. If that, too, isn't wrong, where is the line drawn?

A New Day Dawns

Volume 20, Issue 3, March 14 2003

By Jason Wojciechowski, F99

Hampshire students have probably all noticed by now that *The Forward* has passed on, replaced by a (surprisingly similar looking) paper called *The Climax*. From the very beginning, in the Letter From the Editors, with the line "...as you see a seemingly new and unique Hampshire newspaper...", the new editors attempt to distance themselves from the old paper. Let's see: same logo, same layout, same gigantic Sibie's ad. I'm not seeing any differences yet. Well, wait, there's more to this Letter. Why don't we reserve judgment and carry on.

"[We] hope to be able to do a better job of serving the Hampshire community than our predecessor did," say the editors. Standard protocol when there's a lack of competition (i.e. you aren't trying to sell your paper while mine is still in existence) might be to compliment the paper/regime you're replacing, or at the very least not say anything about your predecessors and simply note without insults or derision what you plan to do. New editors Peter Curtis and JP Hitesman have failed the etiquette test already.

This dissing of *The Forward* is so far out of line, it's not funny. As first year students, do Messrs. Curtis and Hitesman know about the history of *The Forward*? It's certainly possible they do, but this attitude, that the paper should be declared a failure, is ignorant of the history. In the Spring semester of '99, *The Forward's* editor and founder was brought to CRB on libel charges, and as a result, was not allowed to be involved with publications after that. That set the stage for my first semester, which was also the first semester of the outgoing *Forward* editors. As those of you who were around then well remember, *The Forward* was a disaster, with most of its content being drawn from the internet, much of it a newsletter written by Michael Moore. The copy developed on campus was often published anonymously, under the

moniker "The Red Flag," a group of students who ... well, who knows what their aim was. My second year, there was all of one issue published. After that, Jessi Swenson took over and, when she went on leave for the Spring '02 semester, Austen Rachlis grabbed the reins. The paper was published more often, without anonymous articles and without reprinting from the internet. The focus of the paper also started to change, as the editors realized that a "hard-news" based paper would not work, as mentioned in the last paragraph. *The Forward* going in to this semester was far from a finished product. Perhaps it was only a car going 30 mph, when it should have been going 60, but Ms. Swenson and Ms. Rachlis built that car from scratch. That Messrs. Curtis and Hitesman have declared the project a failure despite only seeing it run for one semester doesn't speak well for their vision.

Back to the content: "With an intention to focus on student life and news as it arises, we hope to be as immediate as possible on relaying news and events of all community interest." Nice hedging with the "as possible" bit. If you think you'll be able to keep up with the news on campus as an at-best-biweekly paper, you're delusional. Just as an example, the review of Julian Velard's performance at the Tavern ("No More Love Songs," pg. 5) is around three weeks late at this point. Slack can be cut because it's a review, not a "hard news" story, so the timeliness isn't such a big deal. On the other hand, we've also got, on the front page, "Excitement at the Outdoor Festival." The first sentence states that the event kicked off "Tuesday evening." Which Tuesday? Given that today is Friday, March 7, I'd assume, without context, that means Tuesday, March 4. Imagine my surprise, then, when the article later refers to Friday in the past tense.

The point is not to blast writer Bonnie Obremski for not putting the date in her article.

The point is that, due to no fault of her own, her hard news story is dated. It's old news. The important part of the article comes on the continuation on the fourth page, when Ms. Obremski notes that "it is uncertain whether the event will survive another year." That, in my opinion, is where the campus paper should be focusing its attention and energy. While what happened at the event this year just gets stale as time goes by, especially given the short attention span of the average college student, the possible death of the Outdoor Festival actually gets *more* immediate as time goes on, as it draws closer to extinction. There's an opportunity to focus on a particular issue and come at it from a number of perspectives (students in general, outdoors-y students, administration, outdoors administration, and so on), educating the community about what's going on with the Festival, while also being able to make a larger point about a lack of continuity in Hampshire activities and student groups.

Enough editorializing. It's full disclosure time. I was the copy editor and a news writer for *The Forward*, having been enticed to join by my girlfriend and then-editor Ms. Rachlis, and had intended to continue in at least the copy editing capacity with the paper this semester. I received notice of a meeting at the beginning of the semester, but, mostly because I work about twenty hours a week in addition to schoolwork, couldn't make it. I emailed Messrs. Curtis and Hitesman informing them of this, and asking that they keep me up to date. I never heard back.

Indulge me for a moment: I have a friend who likes reading LiveJournals (<http://www.livejournal.com>), especially those of Hampshire students. I was browsing through the list of journals she reads once when I came upon Mr. Hitesman's journal. To my great surprise, I learned that a "revitalized Hampshire newspaper" had been delivered to the printers a few days earlier, though I still had not heard a peep out of the editors about my prospective interest in helping. Clearly, I

was no longer welcome as copy editor. I soon discovered that former arts editor Zach Bloom and former arts writer Gabe Valdez were in almost exactly the same not. This smells of regime change, which is a patently ridiculous notion for a notoriously understaffed newspaper at a tiny school. At best, not sending an email saying I wasn't needed is rudeness, and at worst, it's paranoia or some sort of odd power-hunger.

Much of the paper strikes me as kind of ridiculous. The lead article, "The State of the Anti-War," is a hodge-podge of opinion and fact. There's no indication that this is an op-ed piece, so one would assume it's a hard-facts article, which it most clearly is not. This is irresponsible on the part of the editors, if not necessarily the writer, though in this case things get murky, as Mr. Parakilas is listed as an associate editor in addition to being a staff writer. Luckily for the readers, Mr. Parakilas never makes an attempt to be objective, so we aren't really under the impression that, for example, the anti-war movement actually is "amazing" in fact, not just opinion. Even putting all that aside, though, we see the same lack of timeliness displayed earlier. The continuation on page 4 mentions February 26 in the future tense, despite the paper's purported March 3 publication date.

I'm realizing that the more shots I take at *The Climax*, the more ridiculous I look. After all, I'm the one who wasn't even worthy of working for this paper. I'm only making myself look bad. As much as I've complained about *The Omen's* contributors seeming to lay into every issue of *The Forward* in the past, I'm now doing the same for *The Climax*. It's different, though, because it's personal. Open season on the campus newspaper (as it makes its return to attempting to be the facts and hard-news based paper it can never be) begins again.

That said, I can't resist taking a few parting shots at Jessica Tarrand's Oscars column. On *Chicago*, her note that the three main characters are shallow and manipulative

misses the point, I think. Aren't they supposed to be shallow and manipulative? Also, the comment "It's been so long since we saw a movie musical?" Is *Moulin Rouge* so easily forgotten, despite multiple Oscar wins?

Ms. Tarrand's comment that she refuses to see *Gangs of New York* because it stars Leonardo DiCaprio (as opposed to Decaprio, as Ms. Tarrand insists on spelling it, something a copy editor would certainly have caught) should be an unacceptable position from someone who claims to write film reviews for a publication that passes itself off as a newspaper. Even supposing Mr. DiCaprio was a bad actor years ago, he's certainly become a good one lately, as his work in *Gangs* drew some positive reviews and he was nothing short of excellent in *Catch Me If You Can*. Meanwhile, the position that he was ever bad is tenuous at best: he was nominated for both the Golden Globe and Oscar for best supporting actor in *What's Eating Gilbert Grape* in 1993.

Leaving Mr. DiCaprio for a second, let's suppose that it was actually Justin Timberlake playing that part. *Gangs* would still be worth seeing for Daniel Day Lewis's comeback and because Martin Scorsese is one of America's greatest directors. I'm amazed that not one of these reviews mentioned a director, writer, cinematographer, or anybody who did not appear in front of the camera. Ms. Tarrand might be better off referring to her columns as "actor reviews" in the future.

Does this article, in the end, have a point? I want Hampshire to have a solid newspaper- or magazine-style publication. I worry that the trend Messrs. Hitesman and Curtis have begun will not see *The Climax* through to that goal. Alienating older students and ignoring history (regardless of how much they appeal to that history for their publication's name) seems more likely to result in the publication crashing and burning in the end than in it reaching the finishing line.

Accepted: To Hampshire

Volume 27, Issue 2, September 29 2006

By Gus Andrews, F95

On old buddy Roger's advice, I went out today to see the movie *Accepted* before it left the theaters for good. ZOMG, check it out, he said. It's completely about Hampshire. I had gotten that vibe from the trailers, in which a dude, who looks suspiciously like the Saturday Night Live actor in the sketches about Hampshire, starts his own college. The movie got lukewarm reviews, but I gave it a shot.

In a post-American Pie age, where movies about teenagers tend to be oversexed, this one hearkens back to well-meaning goofball school comedies like PCU and *Revenge of the Nerds*. In fact, it's pretty clear that someone on the project was aiming for that effect; the soundtrack makes overt reference to *The Breakfast Club* and its sensibilities (other noteworthy soundtrack features include the Pixies' song U-Mass, the Ramones, and *Le Tigre*).

And yes, it was totally about Hampshire.

Or possibly Evergreen. Or Goddard, or Johnson College at U of Redlands, or someplace else at the fringes of the educational system. Well, OK. Seeing as ol' Alma Mater just sent me the surprisingly thick guide to being a Hampshire Alumni Admissions Interviewer (yes, I signed up. obviously nobody up there remembers the chanting and muck-raking and smack-talking I did anymore. ahah-haaa. no, seriously, there are less safe people to send out to greet the noobs. i'll be good, I swear. I'm a Respectable Member Of Academia now) I should probably qualify the comparison. So here's Your Guide To Viewing *Accepted* And Being *Accepted To Hampshire*.

In college, I can expect:

...to major in skateboarding, explaining to my parents that I'm learning about aerodynamics, physics, and mechanical engineering.

Quite possibly, John Dwork did it with frisbee, adding a business component and a study of the history of sports to those topics. Legend has it he went on to work at Wham-O, though The Internets seem to think he's currently best known for editing a number of books on the Grateful Dead.

... that my parents will still wonder about my employability despite my explanations.

Depends on what they're like, but if you expect that, then probably, yeah. Luckily, if you play your cards right at Hampshire you'll probably be much more employable than that guy in the movie who's trying to blow things up using his mind.

... that a professor who lives in squalor on campus will lead class in a bathrobe, holding court like an extra-crazed Lewis Black and developing a massive cult following.

Maybe. Most of the faculty who used to live on campus have retired or moved off to start families, but Hampshire does tend to attract younger faculty with a real zeal for continuing the character of the place, so you may have some aspiring characters on campus. I hear Lester Mazor used to hold court in the clothing-optional hours in the sauna, but I guess he retired. Michael Lesy has his cult following, but he's much less genial than Lewis Black, so unless you have a thick skin, I'd steer clear. Lynn Miller will certainly engage you in debate on the ineffables, wearing his trademark bolo tie and swilling something dubious from an Erlenmeyer flask. He's probably your best bet.

... that students will invent their own classes, and they'll have titles like "Walking around thinking about things" or "Listening to the materials."

Err... no. You may be thinking of Goddard College, from which Hampshire students got periodic reports from transferring refugees. At least at times in the past, students have been able to set their own curricula at Goddard, contracting with professors to complete a course of study at the beginning of a semester.

While I still, to this damn day, wish that I was allowed to develop my own courses at the beginning of the semester -- would someone

PLEASE offer courses titled "Time, Space, and the Internet" or "Cultivating Memes," already? I can give you a reading list! -- this is unfortunately a very difficult model of education to sustain. Self-directed learning is far too amorphous a product to standardize, and standardization is what capitalism wants from us all. Even more unfortunately for such attempts, Hampshire and Goddard students tend to be so deeply opposed to standardization that they fall into anarchy and personal dissolution. Given enough rope to hang themselves with, these students don't even finish the curricula they've developed. I'm speaking from personal experience, here. Don't tell me you'd be different, damn you, I'm a doctoral student in education at a dang Ivy League school now; do you really think you can take me? I know you, you little punk. sheesh.

There is an exception at Hampshire, of course: the periodic "Re-Radicalization" movements and the January courses led by students. During my time the former were led by an erstwhile homeschooler, who insisted that Real Learning could only be achieved by "asking our own questions about our everyday lives" (memorably satirized by Hampshire comedy major Eugene Mirman as "learning about film by smelling the camera"). This homeschooler proposed that we pay Hampshire tuition -- at the time, the highest in the country -- to take classes from our fellow students, effectively(?) seceding from the college. Fortunately, he was largely ignored by the administration, though he did attempt to commandeer a handful of incoming students to participate in this ill-advised project. His legacy is a series of student-taught courses of varying worth, which did in fact have titles like the ones scrawled on the whiteboard in Accepted.

Not to completely dismiss the perennial anguish of students about Hampshire's slide into normalcy, though; the readings we did on our own during that time certainly prepared me well for graduate school in education.

... that everyone will drink and hang out by the pool all the time.

Um, no. If you want to drink, you can find

drinking; if you want to do drugs, those probably exist too, but I was on the substance free hall, so I wouldn't know. That's sort of the glory of Hampshire: if you want it, it's there, but it's most definitely not the only social life to be had. And they're not going to let you near the pool with glass containers. Sorry, even Hampshire has rules about getting glass shards in your feet, ya hippie.

... that hippies will walk around barefoot all the time and get their feet sliced open.

Uh, yeah, even rules about not getting glass shards in your feet won't stop hippies. Rules won't even stop hippies from intentionally composting on their dorm halls. Stupid hippies. That wasn't in the movie, though; that's just a sweeping editorial vagary.

... that "accreditation," when it rolls around, will consist of a courtroom-like hearing where my ragtag bunch of misfit friends will go up against a board of stiff-looking old white people, and it'll just be our word against the frathead morons at the snobby college down the road!

Uh, no. You really think they'd take your word for it that your college is working? They visit campus and take notes. Cmon. Stupid hippies.

... that a small, dubious-looking group of students will be responsible for making up just about everything resembling campus life.

Yep. That's the Super Sixty, five dozen of us who made a power grab to make Hampshire better, or at least make ourselves feel important. We didn't start the school like the guys in the movie, but we and our predecessors and heirs are responsible for the school's various enduring cafes, publications, and shops.

Hampshire students are notorious for starting their own fun; there's no organizations like the Lampoon or Skull and Bones which have been around for a hundred billion years, so each generation of students tends to show up, say "why the hell doesn't anything happen on this campus?!", and, say, start a burger delivery joint in a third-floor lounge one night on a whim. (Nate, where are you now?) Great for learning how to

start and sustain organizations, shitty if you expect your fun to be there when you get there or if you want tenured professors who won't disappear halfway through your Div III (it is up to YOU to put recommendation letters in their folders when they come up for review, it is up to YOU to make noise with the trustees, people). The Super Sixty have their pros and cons; some of them end up being weird demagogues, like the guy who started the secession movement or like his predecessors, the group who demanded that the college stop mowing its lawns. But even some of the really overbearing Super Sixty members who you think are bound to wash out or get arrested become law professors or political science experts or artists with cult followings or published authors/members of Negativland/successful at the same brand of irritating editorialism they cultivated while at school.

... that campus will be full of a bunch of weirdos who I will tell stories about for the rest of my life, and I, as one of them, will feel more comfortable among them than just about any group of people I'll ever meet.

Yes.

That was my favorite part about Accepted, actually. Like *Revenge of the Nerds* and *Real Genius*, it's not about college at all -- that's just window dressing. It's about being accepted for who you are, on your own terms. For me, as a high school senior about to head off to college, that was absolutely what I was all about. I really didn't care about college so much as I cared about not having to put up with the same old normalizing bullshit I'd put up with for the past twelve years. So I packed myself off to Hampshire where it all fell away, leaving me free to discover the bullshit I made other people, locally and globally, put up with on my behalf. It felt like hell at the time, but I definitely wouldn't trade it for the ongoing feeling-that-everything-ought-to-be-fine-all-the-time which I see my Harvard alumni friends struggling with.

yes, two roads diverged in an Amherst wood...
sing it with me now...

No Confidence in President Hexter

Volume 29, Issue 4, October 26 2007

By Jacob Lefton, F04

Having read President Hexter's Letter to the Editors in the Climax (October 16), I must admit I find his handling of Judicial Council misguided and irresponsible. His catty and defensive response is disrespectful to John Kennedy and to Community Council. His actions are more autocratic than democratic, and certainly counter to the values he expressed were important in his latest "Making of the College 2.1."

My focus in this argument is on students, because I am a student and a representative of students to the board of trustees. For the sake of simplicity, understand that in any case when I argue for rights, fair treatment of, or inclusion of students into decision making, I also mean, where applicable and reasonable, faculty and staff.

President Hexter refuses to work in an inclusive manner with students in setting up grievance procedures and a Judicial Council as called for in the college's constitution. His argument seems simple: Judicial Council has not existed for almost ten years. As it, within Hampshire's governance structure, is comparable to the Supreme Court in the United States, we should approach it with no undue haste. In fact, because of the poor quality of the whole constitution, establishing a Judicial Council now would be pointless as the whole system is due for a re-write. In the meantime, he has decided that he and his designees will be the Judicial Council.

During his speech at Commencement in May 2007, he said: "Our student trustee, Jacob Lefton, has written in the latest number of The Omen... 'We need Ralph to start protecting the ideas that brought us here.' This is a heavy burden, but one I am

proud to be asked to shoulder even as I ask myself how I can best discharge my responsibility. Surely there is some variety in the ideas that brought each one of us here, even each student, and Jacob is referring to Hampshire students above all."

If I am handing out geas, I should be considered an arbiter of them as well.

I hardly think the autocratic manner in which President Hexter is approaching the governance of this college is in any way 'protecting' ideas that drew and continue to draw students to Hampshire.

At the beginning of his letter, the president attempts to "set the record straight but assure all members of the community," about three points. The first is something that both he and I can agree on—the situation is anomalous and does need correction. We need a Judicial Council to have any hope of an effective system of checks and balances, but because of feints, dodges, and outright blocks by the administration, we do not know how to go about setting it up.

He goes on to say that with trustees he has been laying the groundwork for an appropriate solution. I hardly call a conversation during the Executive Session with the most disconnected members of the active Hampshire community 'groundwork' toward anything but a legal defense of the Sate comes around to make sure we are actually doing what we say we do. As he states in the letter, "the board is cognizant of increased public oversight of institutions and an increased concern... for practices that do not match written policies."

Finally, President Hexter attempts to absolve the administration from responsibility for any misinformation on this

subject that has been presented to Council. What a bold statement! Considering that Council attempted to work through the last contact named in the non-confidential portion of the Judicial Council records, Aaron Berman—Dean of Faculty—I fail to see how the administration is not responsible for any and all information about the Judicial Council. Considering that more than two generations of students have come and gone from Hampshire since the last Judicial Council meeting, and that the Judicial Council records are sealed, students should not be held responsible for any misinformation. We have what we can get, which isn't much, and few are intent on helping us.

Clearly, as the constitution says, the president is responsible for Judicial Council, not students. Yet he shows no responsibility in the handling of the matter. When students turned to him and Dean Berman with a request to patch the judicial hole in the college's governance a year ago, they were refused. Upon further mention of the issue in the form of Kennedy's "End the Apathy" article, they were scolded like children. He acts as if he holds in little regard the amount of work that did go into the proposal and that is currently going into finally voting on Community Council's bylaws.

Something else President Hexter may not know is that talk about reforming the constitution came up some number of years ago among student leaders. It was something they would have brought up more publicly, but clear disregard for students' opinions by the administration on almost every other matter, as well as trying to ratify their own bylaws kept them from making serious moves on that issue.

A stickler for details, said the president, would point out that Community Council's lack of bylaws means they should have no power anyway. What a low, shameful blow, aiming for students' weak-

nesses. I want to point out that a stickler for details would also point out that the administration has been doing nothing to help student governance get back on their feet. Furthermore, a stickler for details would point out that actively disregarding student opinion and student governance authority proves that to the administration, Community Council has no power, regardless of how in touch with their bylaws they are.

The administration's response to Community Council has been to consolidate power in the chief executive's office by making himself and his special advisor the sole arbiters of justice, for an unknown period of time. If Judicial Council is to be our Supreme Court, imagine for a moment, if you will, that President Bush appointed Karl Rove to decide cases that should be going to the Supreme Court. While I at times admire both President Hexter and Professor Dávila with the utmost respect, and neither are in the same league of evil as those men in our federal government, there are certainly some similar qualities of thought.

Furthermore, President Hexter points out that the constitution itself has led a shadowy existence from its ratification in February 1998, as it was supposed to be delivered to a legal counsel who was to report inconsistencies back to the board before it went effect that July. That we know of, no report was filed. The president even says recent trustees and the college's current legal counsel were unaware of the constitution's existence—clearly a case of neglect on the college's part, but we can't dwell on the past.

If you follow his arguments, you run into the problem that the college is presently acting without a fully ratified constitution, and is also acting outside of it. The president's fix for this is approaching the board verbally and then appointing an administrator in attempt to sidestep any

potential legal investigations into the college's foul play. There is apparently a plan in the works to fully remedy the situation, but he gives us no timeline. The college has existed in a half-alive stupor for years, and continued mediocrity on the highest level is being sanctioned by the college's leader.

It's both mediocrity and autocracy. President Hexter states, "I hope the Community will join me in this effort, for it must be a collaborative one, but it must be one that proceeds in an orderly fashion." Sadly, it is a collaborative effort in which the groundwork is not collaborative. This is not a strong foundation for what the students want. This is not a foundation defending what brought us here to Hampshire in the first place.

In "Making of the College 2.1," President Hexter says, "... responsibility... has never found its necessary place in the liberal arts." It is no small wonder that this is true if college presidents keep carrying on in the manner that he is. He is failing to model good behavior—unless his tactic is that of Papa Bear in the Bernstein Bears Bike Lesson, Saying, "this is what you should not do." It should be clear at this point that President Hexter is not acting responsibly.

And in a childlike indignant manner, he tries to emphasize a 'reality.' "I am the one that brought the Constitution, dusty, neglected and ignored, to the attention of the Board, and 'twas I who made the case for serious attention to the area of governance."

Shame on you, President Hexter. How you could even begin to take credit for something on which countless students have worked for countless hours, days, weeks, months? As I said before, students have been on the ball long before administrators—we are ahead of the administration with almost everything, ranging from academics to governance to campus life—

because we live this experience. We pulled that dusty constitution off the shelf years ago. If the administration paid students any more mind than mere courtesy and tokenism, Hampshire as a whole would be actively grappling with these issues rather than blatantly ignoring students. What the president has not done, and should do, is set up a provisional Judicial Council made of equal parts students, staff, and faculty, as the Constitution calls for. The purpose for this Provisional Council will be to work with the legal counsel and lay down a coherent foundation for grievances and justice that can move forward into future revisions of the Constitution. I call for it now with the authority that I have as a trustee of Hampshire College. President Hexter would do a disservice to the institution by resisting this effort. The provisional council must be in place by February 1st, one week before the February 8th and 9th meetings of the board of trustees. This gives the President three months to simply find willing volunteers. If there is not a provisional council ready to function by February 1st, the issue I will bring before the board, with what I expect will be an overwhelming amount of student support. If provisions are in place, a review will happen on May 1st to assess how much progress has been made. The results will be presented to the board during the May 16th and 17th meeting.

I do not think this is an unreasonable timeline. It has been approximately a full calendar year since Community Council first asked Dean Berman to hold elections for Judicial Council. That twelve months have passed with no hint of what students asked for is an embarrassment.

Respectfully,
Jacob Lefton
Student Trustee

Math 342 Topology Homework 2

by Connor Gallagher

1 Equivalence relation \sim

- a. let $(a, b) \sim (c, d) \Leftrightarrow ad = bc$ for $a, b, c, d \in \mathbb{Z}$ and $b \neq 0$ show that this is an equivalence relation.
Symmetry: $(a, b) \sim (a, b) \Leftrightarrow ab = ab$ which is true $\forall a, b, c, d \in \mathbb{Z}$

Reflexivity: If $(a, b) \sim (c, d)$ then $(c, d) \sim (a, b) \forall a, b, c, d \in \mathbb{Z}$

$$(a, b) \sim (c, d) \Leftrightarrow ad = bc \quad (1)$$

$$cb = da \Leftrightarrow (c, d) \sim (a, b) \forall a, b, c, d \in \mathbb{Z} \quad (2)$$

$$(3)$$

Transitivity: if $(a, b) \sim (c, d)$ and $(c, d) \sim (e, f)$ then $(a, b) \sim (e, f)$

$$(a, b) \sim (c, d) \Leftrightarrow ad = bc \quad (4)$$

$$(c, d) \sim (e, f) \Leftrightarrow cf = de \quad (5)$$

$$\frac{ad}{b}f = de \rightarrow af = be \text{ by solving 4 for } c \text{ and substituting in 5} \quad (6)$$

$$\Leftrightarrow (a, b) \sim (e, f) \forall a, b, c, d \in \mathbb{Z} \quad (7)$$

$$(8)$$

note: $b \neq 0$ thus line 6 can never have a division by 0

- b. What are the equivalence classes for this function?

$[(a, b)] = \{(x, y) \in \mathbb{Z}^2 | ax = by\}$ geometrically this equivalence class for a point (a, b) is all the points at a distance d from (a, b) along a line through (a, b) and $(0, 0)$. This equivalence class is similar to the class seen in problem 6 of last homework.

- c. let the set let $+$ be a binary operation S.T $(a, b) + (c, d) = (ad + bc, bd)$, show that \sim is a congruence relation with $+$.

To show that \sim is a congruence relation it must be shown that $[(a, b)] + [(c, d)] := [(ad + bc, bd)]$ is well defined.

let

$$(h, i) \in [(a, b)] \Rightarrow (h, i) \sim (a, b) \Leftrightarrow hb = ia \quad (9)$$

$$(j, k) \in [(c, d)] \Rightarrow (j, k) \sim (c, d) \Leftrightarrow jd = kc \quad (10)$$

If $+$ is well defined then $\forall (h, i) \in [(a, b)]$ and $\forall (j, k) \in [(c, d)]$ $(h, i) + (j, k) \sim (ad + bc, bd)$

$$(h, i) + (j, k) \sim (ad + bc, bd) \Leftrightarrow bd(hk + ij) = ik(ad + bc) \quad (11)$$

$$\Leftrightarrow bdhk + bdi j = ikad + ikbc \quad (12)$$

$$\Leftrightarrow ikad + ikbc = ikad + ikbc \quad (13)$$

by substitution in (12) for $hb = ia$ $jd = kc$ form (9) and (10).

Therefore $\forall(h, i) \in [(a, b)]$ and $\forall(j, k) \in [(c, d)]$ $(h, i) + (j, k) \in [(a, b) + (c, d)]$ therefore $[(a, b)] + [(c, d)] := [(ad + bc, bd)]$ and so \sim is a congruence.

2 Are the following spaces metric spaces?

a. (\mathbb{R}, ρ) where $\rho : \mathbb{R} \times \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ by $\rho(x, y) = (x - y)^2$ This distance function cannot form a metric because it violates the triangle inequality. For instance let $x = -1, y = 0$ and $z = 2$ then $\rho(-1, 0) + \rho(0, 2) \not\geq \rho(-1, 2)$

b. for $x = (x_1, x_2), y = (y_1, y_2) \in \mathbb{R}^2$ let:

$$d(x, y) = \begin{cases} |x_1 - y_1| & \text{if } x_2 = y_2 \\ |x_1| + |x_2 - y_2| + |y_1| & \text{if } x_2 \neq y_2 \end{cases}$$

To show this is a metric space I will proceed in the usual way by showing that this metric satisfies the axioms of a metric space.

1. Let $x = y$, then $x_2 = y_2$ so $d(x, x) = |x_1 - x_1| = 0$. Now for $x \neq y$ there are two cases to prove that the metric is positive definite.

If $x_2 = y_2$ then $d(x, y) = |x_1 - y_1| > 0 \forall x_1, y_1 \in \mathbb{R}$.

If $x_2 \neq y_2$ then $d(x, y) = |x_1| + |x_2 - y_2| + |y_1| > 0 \forall x_1, x_2, y_1, y_2 \in \mathbb{R}$.

Thus the metric is positive definite.

2. $\forall x, y \in \mathbb{R}^2$ there are again two cases that must be considered to show $d(x, y) = d(y, x)$.

If $x_2 = y_2$ then $d(x, y) = |x_1 - y_1| = |y_1 - x_1| = d(y, x)$

because $\forall x \in \mathbb{R} |x| = |-x|$.

If $x_2 \neq y_2$ then $d(x, y) = |x_1| + |x_2 - y_2| + |y_1| = |y_1| + |y_2 - x_2| + |x_2| = d(y, x)$

because $\forall x \in \mathbb{R} |x| = |-x|$.

Thus $d(x, y) = d(y, x) \forall x, y \in \mathbb{R}^2$.

3. Now I will prove the triangle inequality for this metric, $d(x, y) + d(y, x) \geq d(x, z) \forall x, y, z \in \mathbb{R}^2$

Case 1. For an arbitrary $x, y, z \in \mathbb{R}^2$ let $x_2 = y_2 = z_2$

$$d(x, y) + d(x, y) = |x_1 - y_1| + |y_1 - z_1| \quad (14)$$

$$\geq |x_1 - y_1 + y_1 - z_1| \quad \text{by the triangle inequality} \quad (15)$$

$$d(x, y) + d(y, z) \geq d(x, z) \forall x, y, z \in \mathbb{R}^2 \text{ S.T } x_2 = y_2 = z_2 \quad (16)$$

Case 2. For an arbitrary $x, y, z \in \mathbb{R}^2$ let $x_2 = y_2 \neq z_2$

$$d(x, y) + d(y, z) = |x_1 - y_1| + |y_1| + |y_2 - z_2| + |z_1| \quad (17)$$

$$\geq |x_1 - y_1 + y_1| + |y_2 - z_2| + |z_1| \quad \text{by the triangle inequality} \quad (18)$$

$$\geq |x_1| + |x_2 - z_2| + |z_1| \quad \text{because by assumption } x_2 = y_2 \quad (19)$$

$$\geq d(x, z) \quad \text{because by assumption } x_2 \neq z_2 \quad (20)$$

$$d(x, y) + d(y, z) \geq d(x, z) \forall x, y, z \in \mathbb{R}^2 \text{ S.T } x_2 = y_2 \neq z_2 \quad (21)$$

Case 3. For an arbitrary $x, y, z \in \mathbb{R}^2$ let $x_2 \neq y_2 = z_2$

$$d(x, y) + d(y, z) = |x_1| + |x_2 - y_2| + |y_1| + |y_1 - z_1| \quad (22)$$

$$= |x_1| + |x_2 - y_2| + |y_1| + |z_1 - y_1| \quad \text{because } \forall x \in \mathbb{R} \ |x| = |-x| \quad (23)$$

$$\geq |x_1| + |x_2 - y_2| + |y_1 - y_1 + z_1| \quad \text{by the triangle inequality} \quad (24)$$

$$\geq |x_1| + |x_2 - z_2| + |z_1| \quad \text{because by assumption } y_2 = z_2 \quad (25)$$

$$\geq d(x, z) \quad \text{because by assumption } x_2 \neq z_2 \quad (26)$$

$$d(x, y) + d(y, z) \geq d(x, z) \quad \forall x, y, z \in \mathbb{R}^2 \text{ S.T. } x_2 \neq y_2 = z_2 \quad (27)$$

Case 4. For an arbitrary $x, y, z \in \mathbb{R}^2$ let $x_2 \neq y_2 \neq z_2$

$$d(x, y) + d(y, z) = |x_1| + |x_2 - y_2| + |y_1| + |y_1| + |y_2 - z_2| + |z_1| \quad (28)$$

$$= |x_1| + |x_2 - y_2| + |-y_1| + |y_1| + |y_2 - z_2| + |z_1| \quad \text{because } \forall x \in \mathbb{R} \ |x| = |-x| \quad (29)$$

$$\geq |x_1| + |x_2 - y_2 + y_2 - z_2| + |-y_1 + y_1| + |z_1| \quad \text{by the triangle inequality} \quad (30)$$

$$\geq |x_1| + |x_2 - z_2| + |z_1| \quad (31)$$

$$\geq d(x, z) \quad \text{because } x_2 \neq z_2 \quad (32)$$

$$d(x, y) + d(y, z) \geq d(x, z) \quad \forall x, y, z \in \mathbb{R}^2 \text{ S.T. } x_2 \neq y_2 \neq z_2 \quad (33)$$

Thus $d(x, y) + d(y, z) \geq d(x, z) \quad \forall x, y, z \in \mathbb{R}^2$. Further this shows that d is a metric. For the drawing of open balls in this metric see the back of the sheet.

3 prove the following are metric spaces and draw an open ball about the points $(0, 0)$ and $(2, 3)$

A) $d(x, y) = \max(|x_1 - y_1|, |x_2 - y_2|)$

1. $x = y \Rightarrow d(x, x) = \max(|x_1 - x_1|, |x_2 - x_2|) = \max(0, 0) = 0$
 $x \neq y \Rightarrow \max(|x_1 - y_1|, |x_2 - y_2|), \forall x, y \in \mathbb{R}^2, |x_1 - y_1| > 0, |x_2 - y_2| > 0 \Rightarrow d(x, y) > 0 \forall x, y \in \mathbb{R}^2.$

2. $d(x, y) = \max(|x_1 - y_1|, |x_2 - y_2|) = \max(|-x_1 + y_1|, |-x_2 + y_2|) = \max(|x_1 - y_1|, |x_2 - y_2|) = d(y, x) \quad \forall x, y \in \mathbb{R}^2$

3. $d(x, y) + d(y, z) \geq d(x, z)$
 let $i, j, k \in \{1, 2\}$

$$\text{Let } |x_i - y_i| = \max(|x_1 - y_1|, |x_2 - y_2|) \quad (34)$$

$$\text{Let } |y_j - z_j| = \max(|y_1 - z_1|, |y_2 - z_2|) \quad (35)$$

$$\text{Let } |x_k - z_k| = \max(|x_1 - z_1|, |x_2 - z_2|) \quad (36)$$

$$\text{if } i = j \Rightarrow d(x, y) + d(y, z) = |x_i - y_i| + |y_i - z_i| \quad (37)$$

$$\geq |x_i - y_i + y_i - z_i| = |x_i - z_i| \quad (38)$$

To be continued!

The Cover Letter I Accidentally Sent In A Sleepless Haze To The Poetry Editor of Copper Nickel Without Replacing Generic Place-Holder Words

Volume 35, Issue 5, November 23 2010

By s.c. Svendsgaard F10

Dear look up the poetry editor,

Attached is a poetry submission for your journal, Your Journal. There are number poems in this submission; "Poem", "Poem", and "Poem". This submission is a total of number words. This is a simultaneous submission.

My work has appeared in "Right Hand Pointing." I am currently concentrating in creative writing and linguistics at Hampshire College in Amherst, MA. I am quirky bio factoid.

Thank you for your time.

Yours,
s. c. Svendsgaard

Deathfest Fall '11 Twitter Feed

Volume 37, Issue 5, November 17 2011

Compiled by Zachary Clemente, F08

invictuz_rara (10/19): The fliers and banner are up for #Deathfest

AnotherEcho (10/21): I just remembered that I bought really pretty dice a few months ago and I haven't used them yet. Yay, deathfest! Oh yeah and #deathfest

zaidamus (10/22): @FromTheOldNorse @invictuz_rara @atomiro @birdstare @silby happy #deathfest y'all. I will be wearing my shirt in solidarity!

silby (10/22): Less than 2 hours till I get to play in #deathfest for the first time since I was a first year. Can't wait.

AnotherEcho (10/22): Getting ready to die #deathfest <http://twitpic.com/74aouw>

silby (10/22): All the #deathfest DMs are resplendent in their finery.

invictuz_rara (10/22): #deathfest is strangely slow in the MLH when you're a deadgame DM.

RockyChristine (10/22): "You wrote it like I was

a robot horse!" "You're an automated ketchup



dispenser." #deathfest

silby (10/22): Covered in sponge and vomit at

#deathfest

rougerogue (10/22): #deathfest tweets are usually boring.

Madzteir (10/22): "It is a lot harder to aim nuns than guns." #deathfest

RockyChristine (10/22): "You can run on a table and not leave hoofprints." #deathfest
Madzteir (10/22): Someone just challenged the earth to a gundam fight #deathfest
rougerogue (10/22): You slip and fall and uh... Get ketchup on your bra -jb at #deathfest
Madzteir (10/22): "You're really good at being scary but not so good at having useful hands." #deathfest
silby (10/22): "on a 20 vs a 1 someone is going to the center of the earth" #deathfest
boopsoup (10/22): #Deathfest captain planet, basking rocks, and vodka
boopsoup (10/22): #Deathfest anyone who touch this tiny ball become hypercompetitive about being a puritan mob!
invictuz_rara (10/22): monocles and tophats for all at #Deathfest
RockyChristine (10/22): Pulled tattoo of "mom" off kung fu master's arm. Conjured his mom out of thin air. #deathfest
invictuz_rara (10/22): Just tierported the Love Sausage at #deathfest.
silby (10/22): Died from a shell-shattering shriek shortly after @birdstare turned me into Gamera. #deathfest
RockyChristine (10/22): "You're going to make opposed eating checks." #deathfest
lhatepplScrooge (10/22): Just made a living suit out of Trotsky's body #deathfest
Madzteir (10/22): @jonbrence there was falling sky debris that interfered with the fight, so it was a draw. The earth took 5 damage anyway. #deathfest
RockyChristine (10/22): Ketchup and barbecue sauce mixed together catch fire. #deathfest
RockyChristine (10/22): "The double used ugly cat has now been given away." #deathfest
RockyChristine (10/22): "We don't have a Mario or any plumbers. This is a tenement building." #deathfest

RockyChristine (10/22): "I'm going to distill Fat Chow's mom into a fine whiskey." #deathfest
RockyChristine (10/22): And I have drowned in ketchup. #deathfest
silby (10/22): Arm-wrestling for your life vs. Kenyatta #deathfest
RockyChristine (10/22): "Whoever just made a segregation joke, 2 points of damage." #deathfest
ianmcorvidae (10/22): Left #deathfest early because of a splitting headache. Now feeling better, given ibuprofen, but not gonna go back to Hampshire at this hour.
RockyChristine (10/22): "We had Bibles, we had juggling, we had castration and getting rabies." #deathfest
atomiro (10/22): North Korean taken down by Ukrainian monstrosity penguin #deathfest
RockyChristine (10/22): I think I came back to life in a room full of vrykul. #deathfest
Madzteir (10/22): "Take two points of 'really grossed out' damage." #deathfest
RockyChristine (10/22): There are only 3 women, myself included, in this dead game!
Madzteir (10/22): "Save me. Saaaave me." "She's a fish." #deathfest
RockyChristine (10/22): Stabbed self in arm with tattoo needle, died of instant heart clotting/falling out and ink everywhere. In Howling Fjord w gnomes. #deathfest
Madzteir (10/22): "Penguins can't jump, as they are mostly white." #deathfest
atomiro (10/22): Nuclear penguin collective loses its rigid dictator element #deathfest
RockyChristine (10/22): "So first I sodomized Leon Trotsky." #deathfest
Madzteir (10/22): "I would like to use my ability 'supplemental organs' to stuff her spleen inside myself so she is a part of me forever." #deathfest
silby: (10/22): Died a second time, this time the Death Star (previously a gnome) destroyed me cuz I couldn't keep my mouth

shut. #deathfest

Madzteir (10/22): "Take one point of poor condom pun damage. Don't. Fuck with me."

#deathfest

atomiro (10/22): Crit fail marathon for the tiger

#deathfest

Madzteir (10/22): "You wouldn't hurt a child, would you?" "A cataclysm would!"

#deathfest

silby (10/22): Definitely a fine first #deathfest back as a player.

silby (10/23): Best thing about #deathfest is everyone excitedly recounting how they died to each other.

silby (10/23): Totally different tier 3 than all other tier 3s, this should be pretty good.

#deathfest

Madzteir (10/23): Finally made it to tier 3. I am melded into a flaming radioactive penguin mass with herpes, but is better than nothing.

#deathfest

silby (10/23): This could also take three hours! Since it looks like it will be six mini-games. #deathfest

RockyChristine (10/23): "By the way, if nyan cat shows up, it's SlenderNyan." #deathfest

RockyChristine (10/23): "Stick your fleshy bits together for team Lump!" #deathfest

Madzteir (10/23): The internet is the first to die in tier 3 #deathfest

AnotherEcho (10/23): "You get a gumption bonus of... 17 I guess?!" #deathfest

invictuz_rara (10/23): Crunk appeared where it didn't belong. YEAAAAAAAAAH

#deathfest

RockyChristine (10/23): Attempting to put a tramp stamp on Captain Planet and critfailing. 64 tattoo damage for Eleanor.

#deathfest

Madzteir (10/23): Andrew Jackson: "I defend [the honor of the USA] with my whooping cane." Lil Jon: "WHAT?!" AJ: "It is a cane with which I whoop." #deathfest

RockyChristine (10/23): "If nothing else you brought a shirtless man to the international criminal court. You are guilty of crimes

against humanity." #deathfest

silby (10/23): I take some small pride that I ran the only tier 3 that took a reasonable amount of time in recent memory.

#justdidnotcare #deathfest

RockyChristine (10/23): Iroh: A witch tried to carry me off with her flying monkeys, I killed a lobster, 1 nun, 2 unicorns, and a 12 year old boy. #deathfest

invictuz_rara (10/23): I have ripped a puppy in half in an arm wrestling match. #deathfest

RockyChristine (10/23): "I have ripped a puppy in half in an arm-wrestling match."

#deathfest

invictuz_rara (10/23): Talk about radically inconsistent accents... #deathfest

Madzteir (10/23): "Russia is cold, therefore the vodka is cold. I didn't take science; fuck all of you if you're trying to argue with me on that." #deathfest

RockyChristine (10/23): "I'm riding a levitating bible." #deathfest

Madzteir (10/23): "The afterlife got a 1 on its will save." #deathfest

RockyChristine (10/23): GM slams handful of dice on table for triple-digit damage, killing Archduke Francis Ferdinand, starting World War 1. #deathfest

RockyChristine (10/23): "I am the Italian ambassador for the UN. I'm also a dodo bent on revenge." #deathfest

RockyChristine (10/23): "I'm Burning Man festival, US ambassador to the UN. I used to be a turkey but I'm not any more." #deathfest

RockyChristine (10/23): "However, the afterlife is slightly drunk. You are visited by Mother Teresa, make a wisdom check."

#deathfest

RockyChristine (10/23): "Neoreactive flaming Russian ghost rider penguin with herpes." #deathfest

Madzteir: (10/23): Second place at #deathfest? Personal win.

invictuz_rara (10/23): going to SAGA for a #deathfest victory waffle. No one else is invited.

Calculating the Cost of Hampshire Halloween!

Volume 43, Issue 4

Context from Shel Rosen, F12: *HYPE Committee was the student group in charge of organizing Hampshire Halloween after the dissolution of COCA in 2012. COCA had been the student governance committee which approved funding for all campus events, and they also organized Hampshire Halloween, with the power to approve for themselves as much money as they wanted with no oversight. With the restructuring of student government, the HYPE Committee was now considered the same as any other student group and had to request funding from FundCom like anyone else. Members of FundCom began to question if the Hampshire Halloween budget was too large, but approved the 2013 budget as usual. The 2013 Hampshire Halloween Budget was outrageously high, and the 2013 Hampshire Halloween was riddled with more scandal and mismanagement than usual. In 2014, the proposed budget was even more outrageous: over \$73k! Discussion began on campus about if Hampshire Halloween was something we all actually wanted, if it violated the Americans with Disabilities act, how it could be reformed, and if the money could be better utilized elsewhere. Omen staff weighed in with some Fun Math about how much that money really was....*

By Omen Staff

THINGS YOU COULD BUY FOR
\$76350

- 152,700 Cigarettes
- 7,635,000 Tootsie Rolls
- 898 Bad Dragon Tentacle Dildos
- 305.4 Smooth Fronted Caiman Crocodiles
- 12,183,510 Ladybugs
- 238 full two-hundred copy runs of an issue of the Omen @ 40 pages an issue
- (It's actually enough to fund the printing of every single run of every issue of the Omen that has ever been published since 1993)
- (But Seriously)
- 1.14 Annual Salaries at the median income in Massachusetts
- The annual salaries of 3.49 fulltime Saga Workers.
- 2 Houses in Detroit
- Full Tuition for 1.68 Hampshire Students
- 436 College Textbooks @ average cost
- Enough to feed 315.49 adults for a month in Hampshire County
- Enough to feed 107 families of 4 in Hampshire County• 363 pints of human blood (average person has 10 pints)

That is roughly a six foot cube of blood.
That is 36.3 People's worth of blood.

254.5 roasted pigs
Enough to fund the DMC's trip to Ferguson 18 times over (based on Zoho, supposedly they had to get additional funds from other offices? Probably not 15x what they got though)

20,458 gallons of milk

(By the way, a large portion of the 2014 official adopted budget for the town of amherst is written entirely in Comic Sans, seriously)

Enough to cover HRT at the average dosage cost (@Costco) off-insurance for 326 trans women (or trans feminine people) for a year.

Enough to cover HRT for 16 trans men off-insurance for a year. Childcare for 6.7 children for a year.

Medical care for 48 adults for a year

Bail for 76 Ferguson protesters

381 iPhones

58 Macbook Pros

An infinite number of copies of Linux

153 iPad Air 2s

Nearly 2 cars

3 Weddings

20 boob jobs!

How much of the 12 plagues of Egypt could the Hampshire Halloween Budget Afford?

478 lambs which gets us 8182 pints of lamb's blood (136 cubic feet)

13,877 Frogs

1908 Packages of high-end pubic lice which are resistant to shampoo

286,384.09 Flies

Enough to infect 19,087,500 cows with infectious diseases! (That's way more than we have on campus! We could infect 1.9% of the cow population!)

4786 Vials of staph, enough to afflict 143,605 people with boils

At the very least, the budget is not quite enough to destroy an entire metropolis with Napalm, which costs \$83,000 (note to fundcom, set aside additional \$7k next year) but is definitely enough napalm to destroy Amherst or Hampshire Campus. (This is more cost effective than using gasoline, with which we could only cover 1/8th of campus with the halloween budget.)

227,435 three-inch long locusts.

We could easily afford 1,272,500 square feet of tarp which is more than enough to cast a large enough shadow over campus to block out the sun.

And it's enough to hire 15 assassins to go around killing first-borns (We could also afford 1252 Infant-sized coffins for dead first-borns)

Volume 55, Issue 1 Issue 3, Hampshire College 50th Anniversary Special · **The Omen**
Comment on Student Memory at Hampshire – On HSU
Volume 45, Issue 1

By Xavier Torres de Janon, F12

Every four years, a cohort of Hampshire students leaves, and new ones come in throughout that time, to leave after their own four years. The endless cycle of an institution of higher education.

The particular thing about Hampshire, though, is that after the departure of that ‘class’ (it is important to note that the ‘class’ itself is super unstable, as students leave, come back, transfer in, take their time, and so on), all the stories and leadership of the class itself leave as well. The closest students have to a written history is old Hampedia pages, which are lazily updated and usually left to oblivion. That, and old The Omen publications, which in themselves are (beautifully) cryptic and satirical.

With this in mind, it is not surprising that students have lost absolute track and sense of what the heck the ‘Hampshire Student Union’ (HSU) was/is/was meant to be.

With the departure of my own ‘class,’ all the arguments, brainstormings and negotiations that occurred

once Community Council was ‘dissolved’ will only remain in the subjective memories, Google Drives and paper piles of a few of us. For a while, such a thing as a ‘red binder’ existed, which contained all this information; I, naturally, lost mine, and have yet to know who virtually has all those hundreds of pages.

I can already see strange self-feeding cycles repeating themselves, with hopeful students re-doing work that has already been done, “reinventing the wheel” (- Mitch Krieger F11) once again, not learning from the failures, idealism and short-sightedness of others before them (including myself). Of course, to ask ‘us’ to get involved again would be short of offensive; we did our work, we were frustrated, it exploded, it’s over.

So much drama for nothing.

^Submitted by Xavier Torres

Advice: Stay Away from Hampshire Exploitation
Volume 46, Issue 3

By Xavier Torres de Janon, F12

Hampshire College has exploited me. I have done too much free, invisible, unrecognized and unappreciated work for this neoliberal institution. Too many meetings that end in me doing all the work; too many Doodle Polls that I have to beg participation for; too much planning, organizing, supporting and showing up; too much problem-solving for disconnected higher-ups, myopic due to the students and stories they decide to surround themselves with. Too much putting up with the ignorant whiteness and masculinity that dominate circles of power, my energy, time and emotional capabilities drained repeatedly to the indifference of staff, supervisors, faculty, committee members, students, peers. Exploitation with no financial compensation: a neoliberal culture of unpaid internships and volunteering, of erasure and slavery. All I have are CELs and Ingenuity Awards, hollow networking and references, and a strange, erratic reputation out of my control.

And yet, despite this, Hampshire College no longer invites me to its administrative, suit-and-tie events, common occurrences of first-year Xavier. I am no longer considered in the countless top-down committee appointments, or asked to attend tea with the President, or dinner with the Trustees. You see, despite my sacrifices and incessant work for this ungrateful school, my presence has become too disruptive, radical and

‘illiberal’ for meetings and discussions. Despite the fact that I hold extensive unwritten knowledge and insight given my own unpaid involvement, I am not welcome in governance spaces. Staff members actually have to advocate for me being part of panels and talks, because administration naturally cannot take criticism, although it is essential for this school to ever evolve. This, of course, does not bother me as much as disappoint and ostracize me, my value unrecognized to the point of silencing, censoring. My graduation will be a sigh of relief, and my return to this school will be questionable.

You could say it was my fault, and I agree: I put myself out there, said yes too many times, I agreed and ‘sold out.’ But why must I, again, be the one pointing my finger to this reality? Why must I remind others of my existence, of my body, of my humanity? I digress.

Please do not send me an apology email, or an invitation to talk. These are too late, and I no longer care. Unless you can promise me a job, food or a paycheck, I am not interested in furthering these exploitative structures. My Hampshire spirit can only take so much. I simply advise you to resist exploitation and interrupt these processes. I have learned, as always, through experience.

Commencement will be exciting.

UH OH!
THERE GOES...

THE

OPEN

